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Coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report indicates that governments have continued to increase their support for the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the Human Settlements Foundation, the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund and the Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian people. The report further encourages Governments to increase the non-earmarked component of their contribution. It also shows that UN-Habitat has continued to strengthen its cooperation and collaboration within the United Nations system and with women, youth, local authorities, Governments and other Habitat Agenda partners, as well as to strengthen its Habitat Agenda monitoring programmes.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared pursuant to paragraph 10 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/62.

II. Progress on implementation

A. Funding

2. The Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) has written to all Member States requesting that they increase their contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation. On the whole, Governments have responded quite positively to calls for increased contributions. General-purpose funds from Governments rose from US$6 million in 2002 to US$8.3 million in 2003, while special-purpose contributions from Governments and other donors increased to US$37.8 million during the 2002-2003 biennium. The main concern is that special-purpose contributions remain considerably higher than general-purpose contributions, making it difficult for UN-Habitat to plan its financial commitments and implement its work programme around strategically focused goals.

3. As 60 per cent of the general-purpose contributions come from four Governments, a vigorous campaign has been launched to widen the donor base. The Executive Director has also appealed to member States for multi-year funding to enable more effective support of programme implementation. There are promising signs, with commitments of 15 million Canadian dollars from the Government of Canada and 10 million Norwegian kroner from the Government of Norway towards the Water and Sanitation Trust Fund to support developing countries in achieving goal 7 (targets 10 and 11) of the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, UN-Habitat and the Asian Development Bank signed a memorandum of understanding in March 2003 under which they will provide US$ 10 million in capacity-building grants to Asian cities, to be followed by US$ 500 million in loans for pro-poor investments in water and sanitation through the water for Asian cities programme. UN-Habitat is also developing a slum upgrading facility as an innovative way of raising funds for upgrading slums and for other human settlements activities, while also strengthening the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation.

4. In its resolution 2003/62, the Economic and Social Council welcomed decision 19/18 of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat, in which the Governing Council endorsed the establishment of the Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian people and the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund of $5 million for an initial period of two years. The Council also urged the international donor community and all financial institutions to support UN-Habitat in the immediate mobilization of financial resources for the establishment and operation of the Programme and the Fund. The Programme Coordinator assumed his duties on 1 March 2004 and began implementation of the Programme with a programme definition phase (March 2004 to December 2004), which involved consultations with the Palestinian Authority, bilateral donors and inter-agency consultations, fund-raising for the Fund, assessment of existing conditions in the Occupied Palestinian

Territory and formulation of programme elements. Steps are being taken to appoint a chief technical adviser in Jerusalem and a UN-Habitat programme manager in Gaza to assist the Coordinator in implementing the Programme. To date, contributions to the Fund have been made by the United States of America ($500,000) and Sweden ($275,000).

B. Partnerships

5. Habitat Agenda partners were engaged in the intergovernmental processes and global events of relevance to UN-Habitat, in addition to the system-wide engagement of partners in UN-Habitat. Over the last two years, UN-Habitat has also focused its cooperation with non-governmental organizations on major umbrella groups and networks. While engagement with the private sector needs further strengthening, the local authorities are already extensively integrated in UN-Habitat's work. The new rules of procedures, adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session as recommended by the Governing Council at its nineteenth session have paved the way for enhanced engagement of local authorities in UN-Habitat's activities. A 28-country study on decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities was carried out in 2003 as a follow-up to the resolution adopted by the Commission on Human Settlements at its eighteenth session.

6. The main focus of cooperation and collaboration with non-governmental organizations and other Habitat Agenda partners was on the implementation of UN-Habitat global campaigns for security of tenure and good urban governance, and on the global monitoring of urbanization trends. UN-Habitat worked closely with local authorities and their international associations during the reporting period. At the same time, technical collaboration with local authorities and their associations continued in the context of a number of UN-Habitat projects and global programmes. Partners, such as Global Parliamentarians on Habitat, held the Fourth Global Forum of Parliamentarians on Habitat in Berlin from 12 to14 May 2003 and adopted the Berlin Declaration calling on Governments to increase financial support for the objective of improving the lives of 100 million slum-dwellers by the year 2020, under goal 7, target 11, of the Millennium Development Goals.

7. UN-Habitat worked closely with civil society representatives from around the world and financially supported the participation of members from the non-governmental organization community and youth organizations at the nineteenth session of the Governing Council. The non-governmental organization forum, which was held prior to the nineteenth session of the Governing Council, was attended by the representatives of approximately 500 non-governmental organizations. The main aim of the forum was to promote and advocate implementation of the Habitat Agenda and exchange experiences and ideas on shelter and housing development.

8. UN-Habitat is working towards increasing the number of women's organizations and women's affairs ministries working in the area of human settlement in order to meet the challenge of bringing human settlement issues into the women's mainstream agenda and the 10-year review process of the Fourth World Conference on Women. To this end, UN-Habitat is working with 13 grass-roots women's organizations in East Africa to implement the women's empowerment programme, which focuses on housing development, land rights and the promotion

and sale of East Africa handicrafts at the Universal Forum of Cultures in Barcelona. UN-Habitat is also collaborating with the regional commissions and women's organizations involved in the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and in the preparations for the 10-year review process.

9. A number of women's organizations in Asia participated in the Asia regional expert group meeting on gender issues in human settlements and in the award ceremony for the first contest on gender-responsive local governments and women-friendly cities, held in March 2004. Women's organizations were also represented in the jury for the contest. Women's organizations participated in the consultation on the rights of women to adequate housing, which was organized in collaboration with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on adequate housing and was held in Mexico in January 2004. UN-Habitat has carried out studies on the rights of women to land and property, as part of a larger study undertaken in Latin America, and the findings will be published in 2004.

10. Women's organizations continue to participate in the steering committees of the two global campaigns on secure tenure and on urban governance and the best practices programme. The local-to-local dialogue tool kit prepared by the Huairou Commission, a women's grass-roots organization, with the support of UN-Habitat, will be published in 2004 and a workshop on engendering local governments will be held during the second session of the World Urban Forum. UN-Habitat worked in partnership with women's organizations to organize parallel events on gender, water and sanitation and women in human settlements at the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Huairou Commission is planning various networking events for women's organizations at the Forum.

11. Overall, more resources are needed to support relevant activities undertaken by women's networks in the area of human settlements development.

12. UN-Habitat has a history of working with youth and cooperating with member States to address the issues facing young people.

(a) The Government of the Netherlands has provided support to UN-Habitat's work programme on youth in the areas of social crime prevention and sustainable livelihoods;

(b) The Government of Norway has supported the participation of youth from developing countries to attend sessions of UN-Habitat's Governing Council;

(c) The Government of Kenya has developed an integrated youth policy in Nairobi, including the establishment of a city-wide one stop integrated youth development centre;

(d) The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania is also developing an integrated youth policy at the local level, including the establishment of a city-wide youth council in Dar es Salaam;

(e) The Government of South Africa hosted an international conference on sustainable safety, which include an international youth meeting that was based on South Africa's good practices on youth crime prevention and sustainable livelihoods;

(f) The Government of Mexico will be hosting an international conference on urban youth at risk in Monterrey in October 2004 to define a regional strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean.

13. UN-Habitat participated in a high-level panel on youth employment, held at the headquarters of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva in 2003, in which urban issues were included in the panel recommendations. UN-Habitat has also been requested to organize an expert group meeting on urban youth employment together with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the ILO. The meeting, which is to be held in Nairobi in June 2004, will follow up the Geneva recommendations and explore the urban aspects of youth employment under goal 7, target 11, of the Millennium Development Goals.

14. A draft regional strategy on urban youth at risk in Africa has been prepared and a draft strategy on enhancing the engagement of youth in UN-Habitat is under preparation. Consultations have been carried out with youth at various forums. Cooperation with local authorities has been strengthened in cities where UN-Habitat has already implemented programmes in order to add the component of capacity-building for youth employment and poverty alleviation. Capacity-building frameworks or city-wide one stop youth information resource centres, have been launched (e.g., in Kenya), facilitated by local authorities in partnership with the private sector and youth organizations.

15. The global partnership initiative on urban youth development in Africa will be launched at the second World Urban Forum, which will be held in Barcelona in September 2004. The initiative will be spearheaded by city mayors in the context of the New Partnership for Africa's Development. As part of the initiative, UN-Habitat and various United Nations agencies will jointly respond to requests for assistance.

16. UN-Habitat is also cooperating with various United Nations agencies in youth-related initiatives, as follows:

(a) The Department of Economic and Social Affairs cooperates with UN-Habitat under its youth work programme, which included the preparation of the *World Youth Report 2003*, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session;

(b) The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has signed a memorandum of understanding with UN-Habitat on programmes targeting youth and crime prevention;

(c) The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is engaged with UN-Habitat in ongoing discussions on training manuals (e.g., UNESCO's growing up in cities manual and safer cities urban youth crime prevention manual) with the possibility of launching a joint training programme;

(d) The International Labour Organization is jointly involved with the Department and UN-Habitat in organizing an expert group meeting on urban youth employment in Nairobi in 2004;

(e) The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is engaged in the exchange of information and in collaborating on the development of a youth consultative mechanism, based on UNEP experience in the area;

(f) The United Nations Children's Fund is collaborating with UN-Habitat on the policy dialogue on youth, children and urban governance at the 2004 World Urban Forum;

(g) The World Bank, with UN-Habitat's participation, held a youth, development and peace conference as part of the new World Bank strategy on youth and children. Joint activities are being considered in Kenya.

C. Monitoring

17. The Habitat Agenda task manager system has been designed to allow better monitoring and mutual enforcement of actions taken by international agencies in support of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, in accordance with paragraph 66 of General Assembly resolution S-25/2, annex.

18. The Habitat Agenda task manager system is broad-based, involving all Habitat Agenda partner groups, including relevant United Nations agencies, local authorities and non-governmental organizations. It builds on three pillars: (i) the monitoring activities undertaken on a continuous basis by the global urban observatory of UN-Habitat; (ii) the flagship reports published annually by UN-Habitat, such as the *Global Report on Human Settlements* (last issue launched in October 2003) and the *State of the World's Cities* report (next issue to be launched in September 2004); and (iii) the biennial sessions of the World Urban Forum.

19. The second session of the World Urban Forum will be held in Barcelona from 13 to 17 September 2004. The sessions of the World Urban Forum are the cornerstone of the Habitat Agenda task manager system as they are attended by a large number of partners and are issues-based and action-driven. Their preparation and format are geared to improve synergies and partnerships among international agencies, both multilateral and bilateral. Each session has a specific focus. The first session, for instance, addressed sustainable urbanization policies in preparation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, while the second session will address the role of cities in social integration and the promotion of cultural diversity.

D. Coordination

20. UN-Habitat is participating in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) at different levels. The Executive Director of UN-Habitat participates in the heads of agencies meetings of UNDG. Other staff members participate in the UNDG Support Group and Programme Group and in other relevant meetings. This has improved collaboration with United Nations agencies, programmes and funds and country teams in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium and the relevant goals and targets of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

21. The Millennium Development Goals are integrated into new guidelines for the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and linkages between common country assessment/UNDAF, the Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction strategy papers are clarified. This gives more visibility to human settlements issues, with particular reference to the Millennium Development Goals target of significantly improving

the lives of at least 100 slum-dwellers by the year 2020 and the challenge of halving the rapidly growing urban demand for safe water and adequate sanitation by 2015.

22. UN-Habitat signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in September 2002 and has started to post Habitat programme managers within selected UNDP country offices. This initiative ensures better coordination of UN-Habitat programmes with national Governments and assists the resident coordinator system in providing both national and international expertise in incorporating a specific component on shelter, sustainable human settlements and urban poverty in the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. By the end of 2004, a total of 33 programme managers are expected to be in place.

E. National development strategies

23. A number of Governments have included shelter and urbanization issues in their national development strategies. However, poverty reduction strategy papers often do not include a territorial dimension. Their tendency to ignore the ongoing urbanization of poverty is well documented in the UN-Habitat publication entitled *The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements 2003*. The link between sustainable urbanization policies and poverty reduction strategies remains to be clarified and strengthened in many developing countries. Increased international cooperation is required in this area.

III. Recommendations

24. **Governments that are in a position to do so are encouraged to increase the non-earmarked component of their contribution in order to facilitate the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium and the relevant commitments of the Millennium Declaration, particularly the commitment to achieve a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by 2020.**

25. **The international donor community and all financial institutions are encouraged to contribute generously to the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund and the Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian people to enable UN-Habitat to assist in resolving the long-term deterioration in human settlement conditions in the Occupied Palestine Territory and in fully realizing the objectives of the Programme.**

26. **Governments are encouraged to facilitate partnerships at the national and local levels with civil society organizations, local authorities and the business sector in implementing the Habitat Agenda and the relevant targets of the Millennium Development Goals.**

27. **National Governments and international agencies are encouraged to review and promote the role of cities in sustainable development as the engines of economic growth and to assess their social risk and opportunity as well as their potential assets in relation to rural hinterlands.**

28. **Governments are encouraged to support the participation of partner groups from developing countries at the World Urban Forum in Barcelona in 2004.**